



# The GRANGE

Issue: 91

MARCH / APRIL 2003

## CHAIR'S DIARY & REPORT

Dec 2, 2002 – Christmas Decorating Day - This year we had what amounted to an assembly line operation. One volunteer gathered the pieces of greenery together, a second volunteer wired the bundles and tightened them securely, the next volunteer tied on the red velvet bow, and the fourth attached them to the banisters.

At the same time other volunteers were making up displays for the mantel shelves on the dining room, drawing room and music room. It was all done in record time and we were very proud of ourselves. It was, however, a bit deflating a few days later when a visitor asked why we were not decorated for Christmas! I suppose he was looking for a Christmas tree which of course, were only found, at that time, in homes of settlers of German origin. In the period The Grange represents, 1835-1840 Christmas trees would not have been found in the homes of British immigrants.

The same day Nancy our 'costume lady' was hosting another sewing 'bee' to augment our supply of costume aprons. We have a large number of new volunteers, all of whom will need costumes.

Added to this was an excellent lunch provided by Helen Hatton, altogether it made a very good day.

Dec 10th – The Grange Volunteer party. This is given every year by The Grange Executive for the volunteers. We had a very good turn out and I believe, everyone enjoyed themselves immensely.

January 30th – The Annual Gallery Staff & Volunteer party at a downtown restaurant. Again it was a rousing success, with good food and various activities and competitions. Two of our Grangers won prizes, one Granger won a large clock which she generously donated to the Gallery Volunteer Centre and another Granger won the jitter-bug contest!

March Break, the week of March 10th - The theme this year was Aboriginal Life and Culture. A highlight of which was the performances by the De-Ba-Jeh-Mu-Jig Theatre Group from Manitoulin Island.

Then The Grange volunteers have a more relaxing day ahead - May 5th Grangers will join The Ontario Historical Society on their trip to the Peterborough area –Hutchinson House, the Canoe Museum and Lang Pioneer Village – with lunch, of course! It should be a good day. At least by then this interminable winter should be over. - *Avril Stringer, Chair*

### ANNOUNCEMENT

#### - NEW CHAIR OF THE GRANGE VOLUNTEERS -

After considering several candidates for the position of Chair of The Grange Volunteers, the Nominating Committee of The Grange Executive has voted unanimously to appoint **Cathy Stroud** to the position.

Her appointment has been approved by the Gallery Volunteer Executive.

Cathy will assume her new duties on June 1st, 2003 incorporating them with her present duties as Staffing Chair.

Jenny and I know you will all give Cathy the same unstinting support that you have given me over the past three years. - *Avril Stringer, Chair*

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## 2003 DATES FOR SPECIAL EVENTS

**The Grange  
ANNUAL BUS TRIP**  
Monday, MAY 5, 2003  
Canoe Museum, Hutchinson House  
and Lang Pioneer Village  
in the area of Peterborough, ON  
Lunch Included

**The Grange  
ANNUAL MEETING**  
Monday, APRIL 28, 2003  
Celebration of the  
30th Anniversary of the  
Restoration

*Please check the bulletin board  
for more information.*

**AGO  
VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION  
WEEK**  
APRIL 28, 2003 to MAY 2, 2003  
*All volunteers have received  
a letter and information.*

*As usual, our thanks to:  
Helen Hatton, Modern Kitchen  
Committee & Helvi Hunter, Continuing  
Education*

### NEW VOLUNTEERS

There are now 100 Grange Volunteers. Thirty have joined in the last year alone. It is unlikely then, that everyone will know each other. With this in mind, if you come to the House on your day off please introduce yourself to the shift on duty. You will be surprised at the many new friends you'll make.

*Please Welcome:*

**Helen Lewis (Tuesday)  
Doreen Rapanos (Tuesday)  
Veronica Han (Wednesday)  
Guinivere Pura (Saturday)  
Andrea De Shield (Sunday)  
Lara Harfouche (Sunday)**

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

*Dear Newsletter Editor,*

*Why don't we at the Grange have readily available  
material that promotes our special place?*

*Sincerely,  
Ann Birch, Thursday Volunteer*

Dear Ann,

There are actually two Grange brochures: one of the staircase that goes out to hotels and promotional organizations; and the green (now gold) Grange house brochure that we give out to visitors who wish for one and are available at several locations in Weston Hall (including the ticket kiosks) as well as elsewhere in the gallery. The gold brochure gives the basic information on the house and family in both English and French. This brochure has also been translated into many languages as we mentioned in the December 2002 newsletter.

The Grange cookbook, postcards and The Grange booklet can be purchased at the Gallery Shop. The Shop has an entire section devoted to The Grange and items reflecting the 19th century. Grange Volunteers are able to remind visitors to check the Shop if interested.

The Grange is also featured in the What's On Today flyer (available in Weston Hall), in the Members Journal, the AGO website and all the school flyers that are sent out. We are well represented in the front of the AGO, which is where people pick up this sort of material.

Thank you for the question.

- The Newsletter Editor

*Dear Newsletter Editor,*

*Who can I talk to about getting the most out of my volunteer experience at The Grange?*

- Grange Volunteer

Dear Grange Volunteer,

Communication is the key. Start by speaking with your Day / Shift Captain and fellow volunteers. The Day Captain is current with the news, events and overall workings of The Grange as she attends the regular meetings at that level. The Day Captain is also the designated person for communicating news to the volunteers on their respective shifts.

The Day Captain may recommend that you speak to one of the Volunteer Executive members in charge of the Committees that look after specific areas of The Grange. Depending on your area of interest or specialty, you may be a definite asset in areas such as baking the Grange bread, assisting with training suppers, writing a newsletter item, research and so on.

You may also want to speak with the Chair of The Grange and the Site Co-ordinator for their feedback on what you can offer The Grange.

Most of all, join in on the Volunteer Suppers and events for The Volunteers where ideas can be shared.

Thank you for the question.

- The Newsletter Editor

## The Grange Volunteer Executive 2002-2003

**CHAIR**  
Avril Stringer  
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**SECRETARY**  
Jane Ash

**TREASURER/RESEARCH**  
Avril Stringer

### COMMITTEES

**CONTINUING EDUCATION**  
Helvi Hunter

**HOUSE COMMITTEE**  
Jane Heinemann

**HISTORIC KITCHENS**  
Pauline Lee

**MODERN KITCHEN**  
Helen Hatton

**STAFFING**  
Catherine Stroud

### DAY CAPTAINS

Monday: Jane Heinemann  
Tuesday: Elvira Putrus  
Wednesday: Cathy Stroud  
Wednesday Bridge: Helvi Hunter  
Wednesday Eve: Marg McGuigan  
Thursday: June O'Brien  
Friday: Beverley Sutton  
Saturday: Ninette Gyorody  
Sunday: Edna Rigby

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### **REMINDER**

Please submit news articles & letters to the editor for the next Grange newsletter by  
**FRIDAY, MAY 30, 2003.**

April 27, 1973. It was the gala opening of the restored Grange, first home of the art gallery and a national historic site. The previous two years had been busy with structural restoration, under the direction of architect Peter Stokes, interior planning by finishing consultant Jeanne Minhinick and fundraising by the Volunteer Committee. The Grange restoration committee was led by volunteer, Mary Alice Stuart and staff member Margaret Machell, soon to become Keeper of The Grange, handled the administration.

Thirty years later. The Grange is still an active centre in the gallery. We interpret the house for the over 20,000 people who visit each year. A visit to the house is included in four different AGO education programmes. Cooking is still done in the original bake oven and over the open hearth.

In recognition of this anniversary year, we have several exciting new programmes. The anteroom to the library will be reinstalled with a permanent exhibition on the Boulton family and The Grange within the context of the growing city of Toronto (more about this below). A neighbourhood community arts project will happen in the fall. AGO docent, Jack Carr performs the role of William Chin, long time butler at The Grange, and remi-

niscas about the family and life in The Grange. Preface Theatre and Fallen Angels Productions hope to stage several performances of *To Have and To Hold*, four nineteenth-century French farces, in various rooms throughout the house late fall. And, *The Grange Cookbook* is being rewritten in partnership with Anne Yarmowich, Executive Chef of AGORA, blending recipes from the past with the present AGO.

The project that most of you have been inquiring about is the reinstallation of the anteroom. I outlined our plans in the June newsletter so will not go into details about the content other than to say that each section is delineated by different family members. The installation will take place in 4 different stages. The first will be the removal of "Childless" by Robert Fones and the preparation of the cases. Next, we will create mock-ups of the panels. This will allow us to undertake some formative evaluation to ensure that the content is both meeting our goals and the visitor's needs. On completion of this testing, the final panels will be designed and installed. The last stage is the creation of the audio. Using primary source material, the audio will allow the visitor to hear first hand accounts of the city, the house and the family.

## A MAN FOR ALL SEASONS

### Mackenzie: A Political Biography of William Lyon Mackenzie

By John Sewell; James Lorimer, 249 pages, \$29.95

It's a compelling read. But don't expect biography as story-telling — in the manner of Charlotte Gray or Chris Raible. John Sewell's style is plain, at times dry, but by Chapter 3, I couldn't put the book down. Sewell gives a straightforward account of William Lyon Mackenzie's courageous struggle against what Charles Dickens called "the wild and rabid Toryism of Toronto." What's more, he shows Mackenzie as a man for all seasons, whose democratic vision offers lessons for voters today.

Before I read Sewell's account, I didn't fully understand what Mackenzie was up against in his battle for responsible government. The author makes clear the helplessness of Upper Canada's elected Legislative Assembly. Any bill that ran against the wishes of the Family Compact could be killed by the Executive and Legislative Councils. These councils, controlled by the "30 tyrants" as Mackenzie called them, were appointed by a succession of compliant lieutenant-governors.

Even the Assembly itself, dominated by Tories after January 1831 and egged on by Attorney General Henry Boulton and others, believed it had the right to overturn the decision of the electorate. Five times in one session the Assembly ejected Mackenzie from the House. And five times an overwhelming majority re-elected him!

The Tories' vendetta against Mackenzie backfired again when his fellow aldermen appointed him to the position of mayor of the new city of Toronto. The year 1834 seems remarkably like the 1990s when provincial restructuring resulted in the downloading of financial responsibilities to the new council. Once more, Mackenzie ran up against the Family Compact's banking cronies who refused loans for new sewers, wooden sidewalks, and road repair.

Again elected to a Reform-dominated Legislative Assembly in late 1834, Mackenzie chaired the Committee on Grievances. Tirelessly he attacked the Crown company involved in land speculation, scandals with the Welland Canal project, and the refusal of a new lieutenant-governor, Sir Francis Bond Head, to allow responsible government.

Head dissolved the Assembly in 1836 and called an election. By vote-rigging and violence at the polls, his gangs succeeded in bringing about a Tory victory. Sewell sees Head's gangsterism as the principal cause of the Rebellion of 1837.

No one has told ever told the story of the Rebellion better than Sewell. Particularly chilling are Head's words after its failure: *I firmly believe . . . that the disease of democracy has ceased to be infectious—that we have now nothing to dread but its contagion, and, consequently, nothing to avoid but its actual contact.* (166)

Head was wrong, of course. Mackenzie's democratic ideals changed Canada profoundly, though, as Sewell points out, some of these ideals are now in danger of being set aside.

Take Mackenzie's faith in the wisdom of informed voters, for example. Throughout his political career, he kept the electorate informed through his newspapers, his public forums on contentious issues and his publication (sometimes at his own expense) of the debates of the Legislative Assembly. Sewell shows how federal and provincial politicians today try to withhold basic information by limiting hours of public hearings, prohibiting public deputations, and using advertising to brainwash.

There's an affecting moment near the end of the book when the author stands beside Mackenzie's grave in the Necropolis and spells out his fears and hopes:

*My city—your city—has suffered many calamities of late, including the outrageous fortune of forced amalgamation and its financial problems. I'm deeply worried that the energy that you, I, and many, many others put into this city for the past two hundred years now counts for naught. . . . [But] you've been a powerful inspiration. You have lifted my spirits and helped to clarify my thoughts about the kind of government I want to strive for.* (201-2)

When I think about the power of informed voters, I too find my spirits lifted. Recent months have seen the exposure of the computer-contract scandal and the secret deals of the Union Station development, the tentative withdrawal from privatization of Ontario Hydro, and mass opposition to the war on Iraq. As Mackenzie so ardently believed, ordinary people, drawn into discussion and debate, can make a difference.

—Ann Birch, Thursday Volunteer

## POTASH, PEARLASH AND SOAP MAKING part 1

Immigrants to Upper Canada in the early 19th century had first to clear the land they wished to work. Thomas Priestman an immigrant from Cumberland in Northwestern England settled in Adolphustown in the Bay of Quinte. He wrote to his brother in January 1811. (The spelling is Thomas's)

*...The work is not so much to put in a crop of wheat into new land hear as to put in a crop in new land in England. It is not more than 6 day's work to chop the timber (from) an acre of land into 14 foot logs, as that is the length they are commonly cut for to be heaped up to burn. They will sumetimes roal 20 such ones together and a fine fire they make if the wether is dry. .*

*When they are burned out they scrape the ashes together and makes them into pot or pearel ashes and, where a man can have these made up at home, it will generaley clear the expenses of clearing...*

Ashes could be processed by the settler. They were packed into barrels with one or more holes in the bottom. Buckets were placed under the holes and water poured through. The buckets collected the weak solution of potassium carbonate. This was boiled in the potash kettle until thick. When cooled the mixture solidified and was broken into lumps. Exhausting labour it required 15 cords of wood to produce 15 bushels of ashes from which 112 lbs of potash was processed. It was nevertheless profitable, a barrel of first quality ashes would fetch £5 to £7 from Wm Proudfoot.

Quality – this was important – oak, elm and ash trees were felled for construction and other purposes, beech and maple logs were considered worthless except for the ashes. "Ferns furnished most ashes, shrubs gave more than trees, and leaves and small branches more than trunks," (Edwin Guillet, The Pioneer Farmer and Backwoodsman) However, ashes made potash, the first cash crop for settlers. The prices of £5 or £7 must have been for processed ashes, or potash. If the settler was unwilling to undertake the labour of processing, the fresh ashes could be taken to the ashery. Prices here, of course, were very different.

William Allen, Inspector of Pot and Pearl Ashes and Flour in York was prepared to pay seven pence, Halifax currency, for ashes delivered to the ashery opposite the jail, and five pence if he picked them up. Only dry ashes were accepted.

Mr Allen was not the only one in the 'ashes' business. "... Duke Kendrick erected a potashery on lot No. 7, west side of Yonge Street in December 1799." Under the heading "Ashes! Ashes! Ashes!" he listed the prices he was prepared to pay but stipulated that he would not pay cash but "...merchandise at cash price."

These ashes when processed produced potash and pearlash, possibly Canada's first export industry.

Pearlash was a forerunner of baking powder, a raising agent. Potash was used as a fertilizer, and by the textile industry as a bleaching agent. Potash also with the addition of lime and sand produces glass. However by 1835, advances in chemistry and the high cost of transportation lessened the trade in ashes and eventually it ceased altogether.

Land still had to be cleared, however, and the best way was to burn the cleared logs. The best ashes would be saved and used for soap making.

*-to be continued..- Avril Stringer, Research Committee*

## THE ROLE OF WILLIAM CHIN - THE GRANGE BUTLER

AGO docent, Mr. Jack Carr plays the role of long-serving butler to The Grange, William Chin. From Jack's discussion:

*After the deaths of Harriette Dixon Boulton Smith in 1909 and of Goldwin Smith in 1910, William Chin, butler, having been on the household staff for 52 years, reminisces about the Boultons and the Smiths. D'Arcy Boulton, Jr., (who built The Grange in 1817-1818), his three brothers and his father were members of the "Family Compact", whose actions sparked the rebellion of 1837. D'Arcy's son, William, Harriette's first husband, Tory Member of Parliament, four times Mayor of Toronto, was tainted by many scandals. To protect the property from creditors, ownership of The Grange was transferred to Harriette in trust. Harriette's second husband, Professor Goldwin Smith, was an opinionated journalist, know as "the Sage of The Grange". Ownership of the house was later transferred to the new Art Museum of Toronto.*

Jack A. Carr, graduated from the University of Toronto in 1941 in Chemical Engineering. He was Flight Lieutenant, R.C.A.F., from 1941-1945. He retired from industry in 1980 as head of Dunlop Ltd.'s North American Research Centre. He became a part-time student at the Ontario College of Art and was graduated in 1993. He has been a Docent at the AGO since 1993, member of the Arts and Letters Club of Toronto since 1983 where he gained some stage experience.

